

**BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT  
STAFF REPORT****Date: January 9, 2012****CASE NUMBER**

5731/5661/5550/5345

**APPLICANT NAME**

Austal USA, LLC (Thompson Engineering, Agent)

**LOCATION**100 Dunlap Drive  
(West side of Dunlap Drive, 450'± West of U.S. Highway  
90 at the entrance to the Bankhead Tunnel)**VARIANCE REQUEST****SIGNAGE:** Sign Variance to allow two additional wall signs (443 square feet each) and the replacement of a 465 square foot sign with a 1,095 square foot sign to allow for a new total of 7,647 square feet of signage in an I-2, Heavy Industry District.**ZONING ORDINANCE  
REQUIREMENT****SIGNAGE:** The Zoning Ordinance allows three signs with each allowed to be up to 30% of the usable wall area or 350 square feet, whichever is less, in an I-2, Heavy Industry District.**ZONING**

I-2, Heavy Industry District.

**AREA OF PROPERTY**

545,100 Square Feet / 12.5± Acres

**TRAFFIC ENGINEERING  
COMMENTS**

No comments.

**CITY COUNCIL  
DISTRICT**

District 2

**ANALYSIS**

The applicant is requesting a Sign Variance to allow two additional wall signs (443 square feet each) and the replacement of a 465 square foot sign with a 1,095 square foot sign to allow for a new total of 7,647 square feet of signage in an I-2, Heavy Industry District; the Zoning Ordinance allows three signs with each allowed to be up to 30% of the usable wall area or 350 square feet, whichever is less, in an I-2, Heavy Industry District.

The applicant is requesting the increased square footage due to the size of the industrial building and its location within an industrial complex. The wall which are proposed to be the location of the 443 square foot signs are 17,350 square feet respectively, and the wall proposed to be the location of the 1,095 square foot sign is 35,000 square feet. The two smaller signs would represent 2.6%± of the total usable wall space and the larger sign would represent 3.1%± of the

total usable wall space. If approved, the site would have a total of 7,647 square feet in signage consisting of: three (3), 443 square foot signs; one (1), 471 square foot sign; two (2), 1,095 square foot signs; and three (3), 1,219 square foot signs.

The applicant states that the location of the fabrication building in relationship to the interstate highway and the Mobile River necessitates signs on the East and West walls exceeding the allowable limits. It is also argued that the location is surrounded by heavy industry with existing signage exceeding the allowable limits would indicate that the proposed signage does not violate the spirit and intent of the Zoning Ordinance.

The Zoning Ordinance states that no variance shall be granted where economics are the basis for the application; and, unless the Board is presented with sufficient evidence to find that the variance will not be contrary to the public interest, and that special conditions exist such that a literal enforcement of the Ordinance will result in an unnecessary hardship. The Ordinance also states that a variance should not be approved unless the spirit and intent of the Ordinance is observed and substantial justice done to the applicant and the surrounding neighborhood.

Variances are not intended to be granted frequently. The applicant must clearly show the Board that the request is due to very unusual characteristics of the property and that it satisfies the variance standards. What constitutes unnecessary hardship and substantial justice is a matter to be determined from the facts and circumstances of each application.

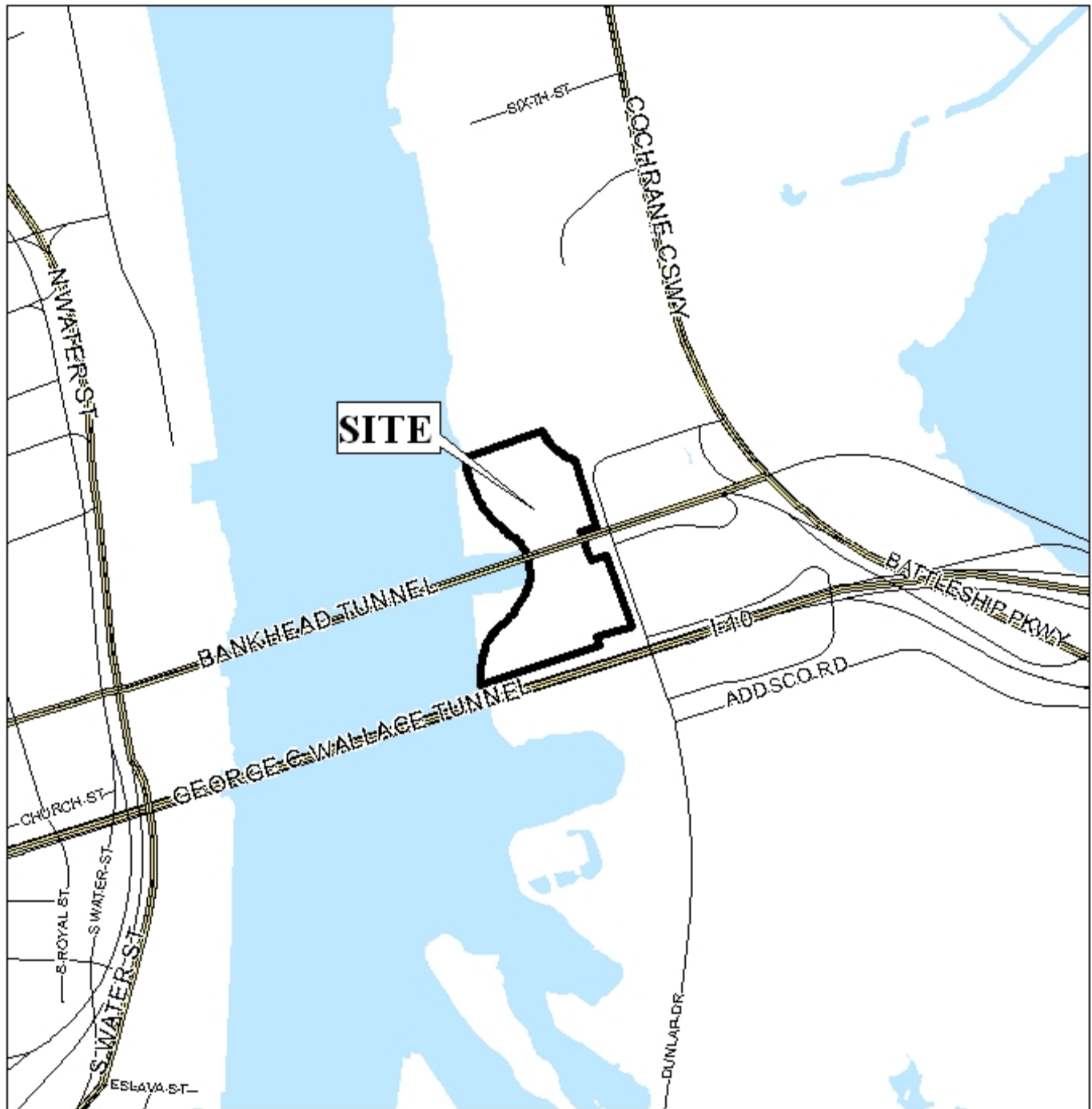
The applicant has been granted three previous variances for wall signage exceeding the maximum allowable square footage, each time for proposed facilities expansion. The information provided regarding the size of the proposed structure, as well as its proximity to the interstate and Mobile River, may indicate that a literal application of the Sign Regulations could result in an unnecessary hardship to the property. As a further expansion is now proposed, coupled with the fact that the signage would occupy a maximum of 3.1% of the end wall square footage, there may be special conditions associated with the site that would justify the granting of a variance.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Based upon the preceding, this application is recommended for approval, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) the obtaining of a sign permit for each sign; and
- 2) compliance with all other codes and ordinances.

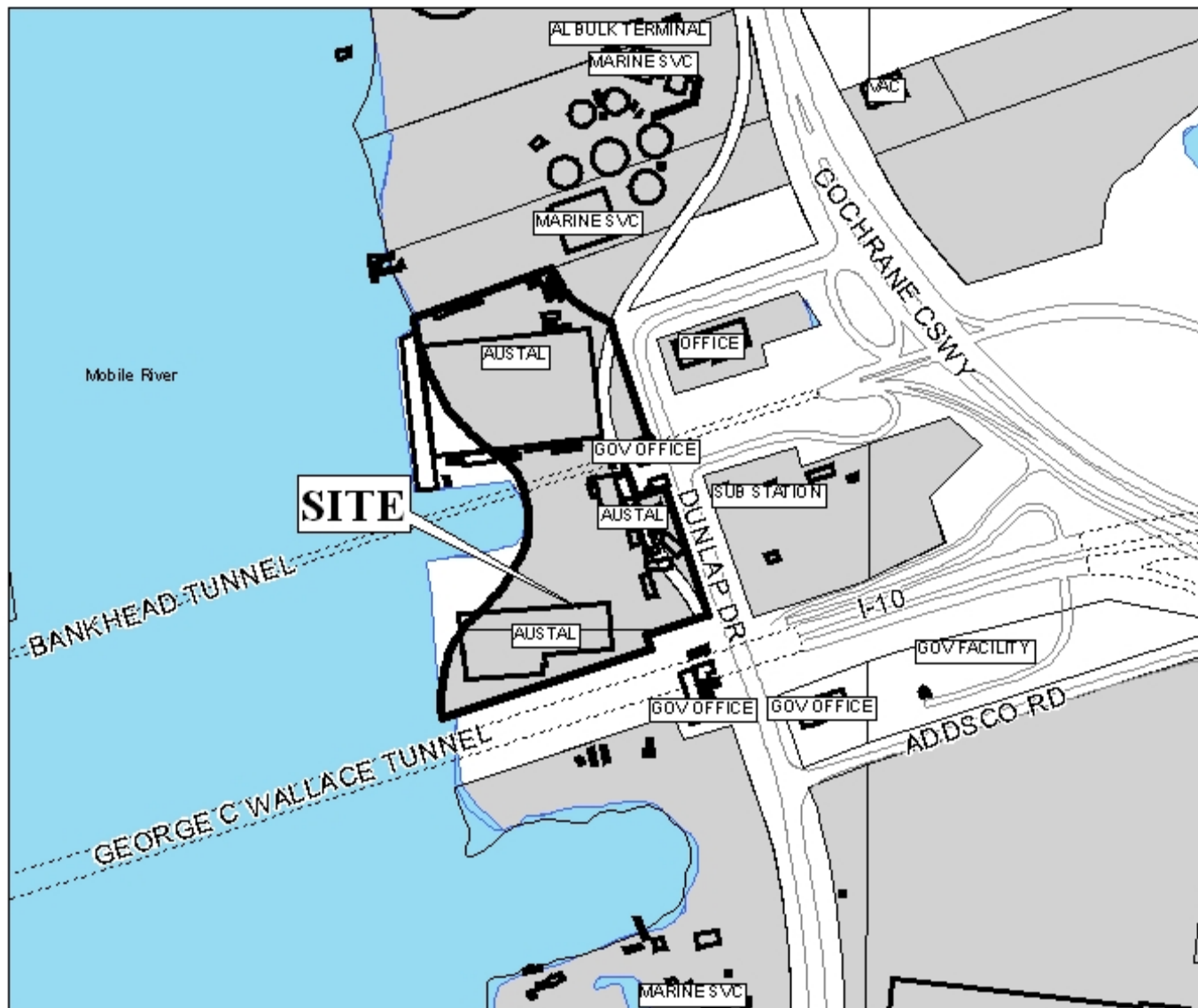
## LOCATOR MAP



APPLICATION NUMBER 5731/5661/5550/5345 DATE January 9, 2012  
APPLICANT Austal USA, LLC  
REQUEST Sign Variance



# BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT VICINITY MAP - EXISTING ZONING



The site is surrounded by industrial land use.

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APPLICANT Austal USA, LLC

REQUEST Sign Variance

LEGEND

R-1	R-2	R-3	R-A	R-B	H-B	T-B	B-1	LB-2	B-2	B-3	B-4	B-5	I-1	I-2
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N  
NTS

# BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT VICINITY MAP - EXISTING ZONING

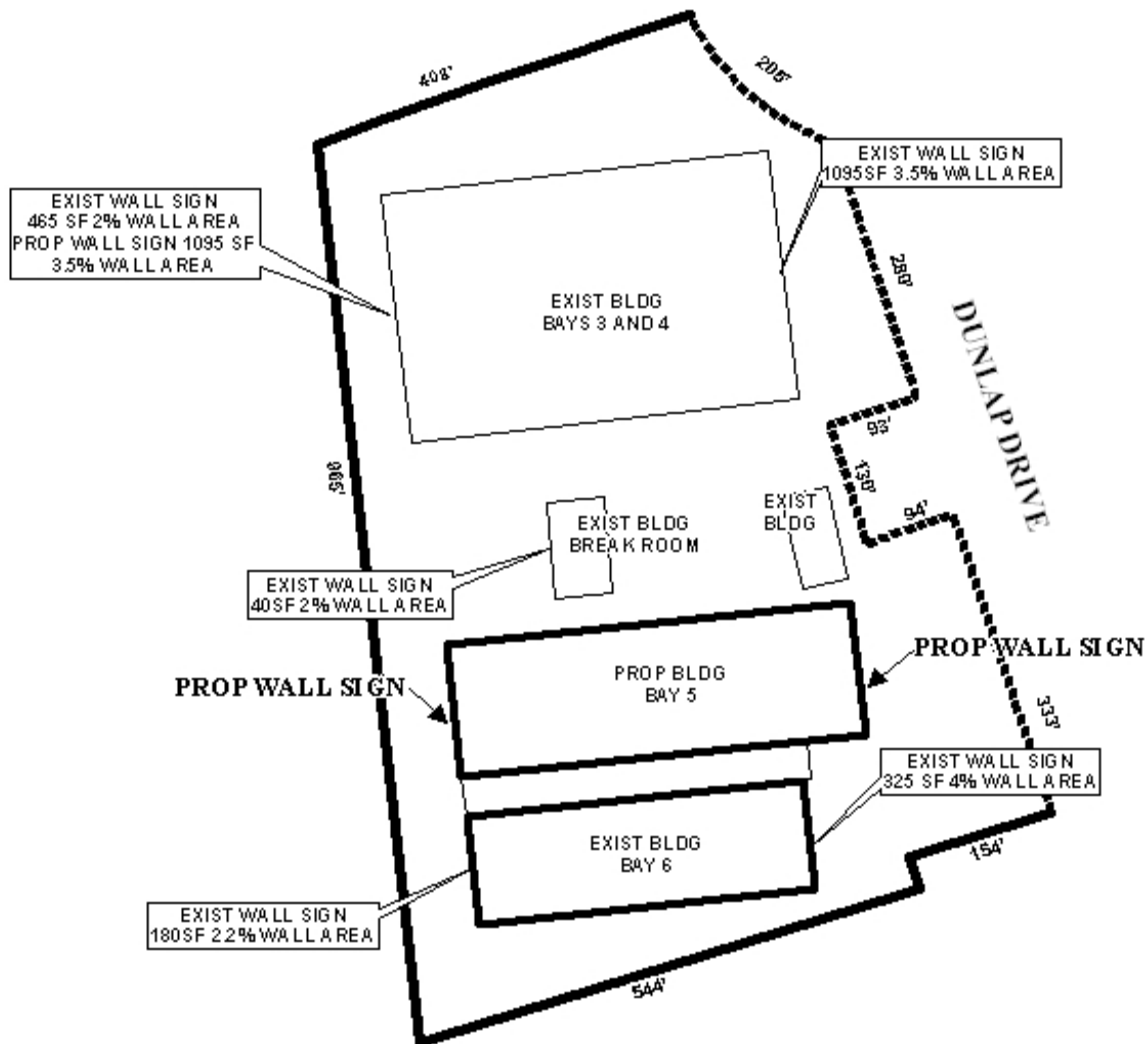


The site is surrounded by industrial land use.

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# SITE PLAN



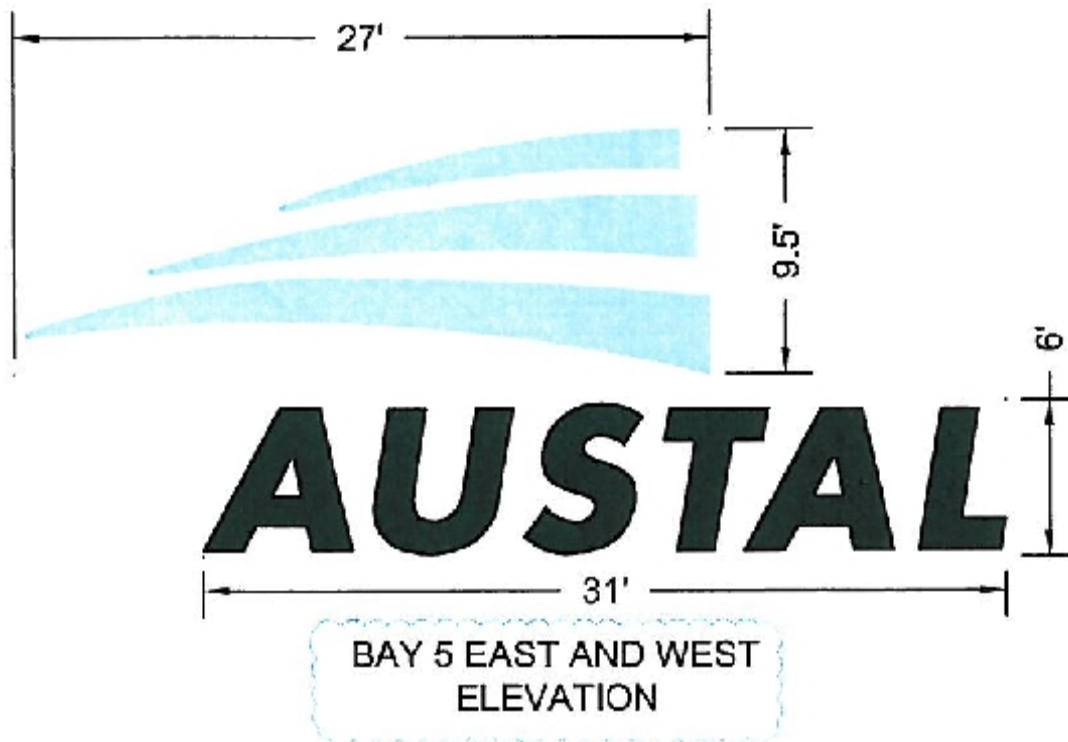
The site plan illustrates the existing signage and proposed wall signs on the proposed building.

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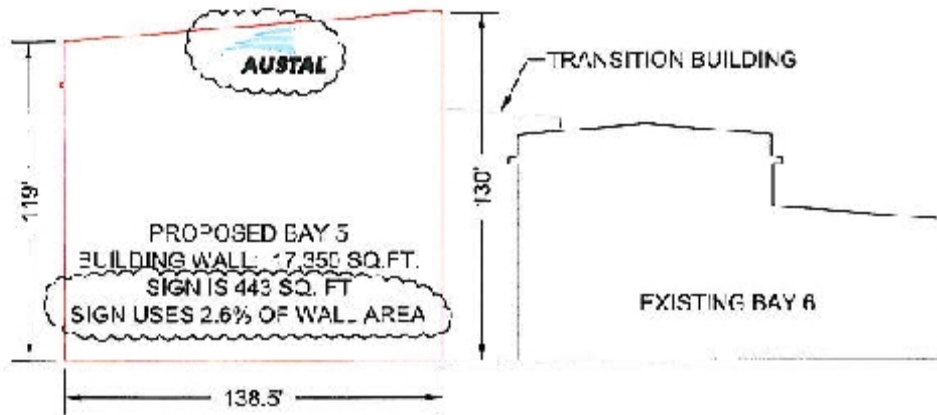
## SIGN DETAIL



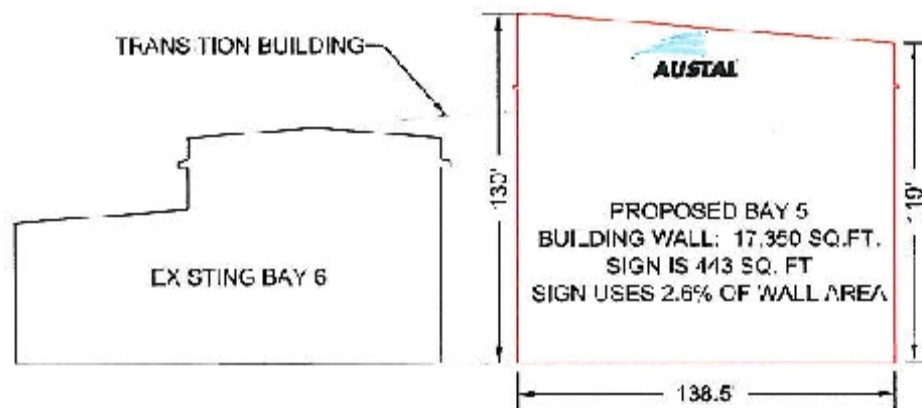
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# SIGN DETAIL



WEST ELEVATION



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 APPLICANT Austal USA, LLC  
 REQUEST Sign Variance





## SIGN DETAIL

**AUSTAL**      9.6'

49'

EXISTING WEST ELEVATION

42' 6"

15'

**AUSTAL**      9.6'

49'

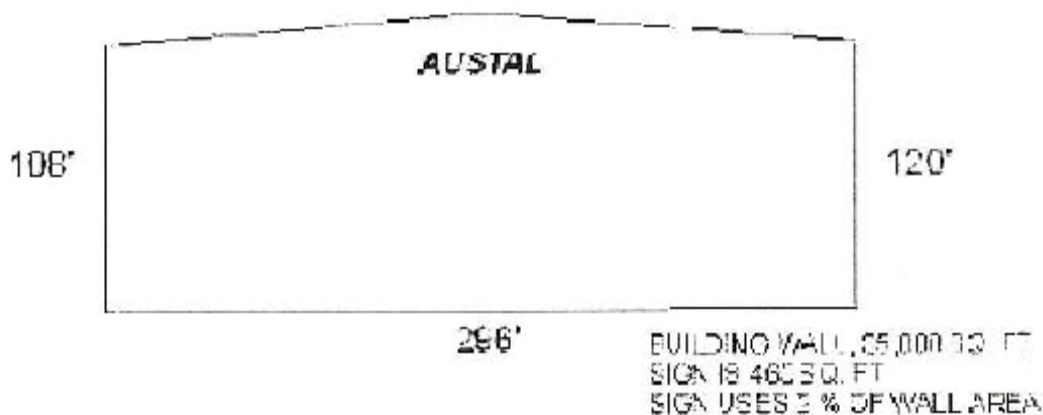
EXISTING EAST ELEVATION  
AND PROPOSED WEST ELEVATION

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N  
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↓  
NTS

# SIGN DETAIL

EXISTING WEST BUILDING ELEVATION  
(TO BE REPLACED BY SIGN WITH SAME  
DIMENSIONS AS EAST SIDE)



EAST AND WEST  
PROPOSED BUILDING ELEVATIONS



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N  
  
 NTS